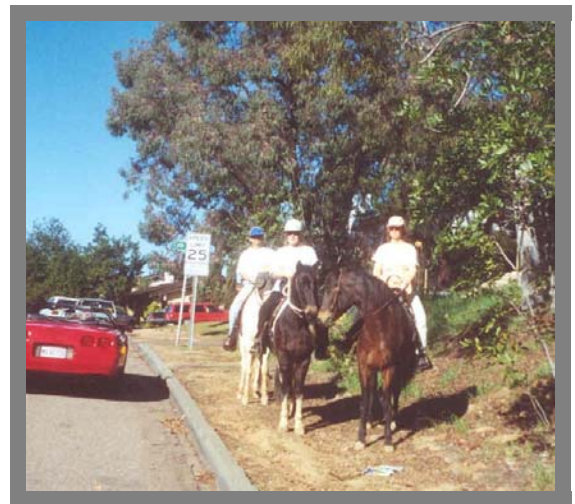


Sweetwater Community Trails and Pathways Plan

Trails: The Community Connection

The Community Trails Master Plan will be utilized to develop a system of interconnected regional and community trails and pathways. These trails and pathways are intended to address an established public need for recreation and transportation, but will also provide health and quality of life benefits associated with hiking, biking, and horseback riding throughout the County's biologically diverse environments.

Community trails serve a different function than regional trails, which are focused on the provision of long linear distances. Instead, community trails are "local public facilities" in close proximity to residents that provide transportation, recreation, access, infrastructure, linkages and safe routes throughout a community. The Community Trails Master Plan (CTMP) involves both trail development and management on public, semi-public and private lands. The CTMP has established two forms of non-motorized facilities called "Trails" and "Pathways" that provide passive recreational, and alternative modes of transportation.



Sweetwater Community Pathway, Bonita

Trails are typically away from vehicular roads that are primarily recreational in nature but can also serve as an alternative mode of transportation. They are soft-surface facilities for single or multiple uses by pedestrians, equestrians, and mountain bicyclists.

Pathways are a non-motorized transportation facility located within a parkway or road right of way. A riding and hiking trail located in the road right of way is considered a pathway. They are soft-surfaced facilities intended to serve both circulation and

recreation purposes. Pathways help make critical connections and are an integral part of a functional trail system.

THE NEED FOR TRAILS

The community trail needs are based on an equation established by the Trails System Assessment (TSA) in 2001, which identified a minimum baseline level of service for each community by population. The Baseline Level of Service or Trail Need is 0.8 miles of trail per 1,000 people.

The “Trail Need” is the minimum length of trail miles (baseline level of service) for each Community and Subregional Plan Area. Population statistics from the 2000 U.S. Census were used to determine the current trail needs in Sweetwater. Based on the census, the population of the Sweetwater Community Plan Area is 13,139 and there is a current need for 11 miles of community trails. In the year 2020, the population is projected to increase to 15,280 and there would be a future need for 12 miles of community trails.

For additional information about the baseline level of service and trail needs, please refer to the discussion under “**The Need for Trails**” and **Tables NT-1 and NT-2** in the CTMP.

COUNTYWIDE TRAIL GOALS AND POLICIES

The “**Countywide Goals and Policies**” contained in the CTMP apply to all

community and sub-regional plan areas. Community-specific goals and policies are intended to accommodate specific needs and they will be implemented when feasible. The Sweetwater Community Planning Group developed Community Specific Goals and Policies for their community trails plan. The abbreviations are as follows:

SG = Community Specific Goal

SP = Community Specific Policy

Goal: SG 1

Develop and implement a comprehensive Trails Plan – to create a fully connected web of well-marked riding and hiking trails that deliver an exceptional recreational experience.

Where Community-specific goals and policies are not addressed, the “**Countywide Goals and Policies**” contained in CTMP shall apply.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION GUIDELINES

Countywide trail guidelines in the Community Trails Master Plan apply to all community and sub-regional plan areas. Community-specific guidelines are intended to accommodate specific community needs and they will be implemented when feasible. Where Community specific guidelines are not addressed, the Countywide “**Design and Construction Guidelines**” contained in the CTMP shall apply.

SWEETWATER COMMUNITY TRAIL IMPLEMENTATION INFORMATION

The community of Sweetwater suggested the following implementation alternatives:

Bonita Valley Trails

For many decades, maintenance of County trails in the Bonita/Sunnyside area has been substantially supplemented with the volunteer efforts of the Bonita Valley Horsemen.

Bonita Valley Horsemen has recently merged with a new organization called Bonita Valley Trails to combine the efforts of all trail users – equestrian, bikers, and hikers. Recently Bonita Valley Trails has begun coordinating trail care efforts with other non-profit organizations, such as the bike and running clubs and various Scouting organizations. The combined efforts of Bonita Valley Trails have been protecting and maintaining trails for decades, and can be relied upon to supplement County trail care efforts for decades to come.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Most of the wilderness trails on the east side of the Sweetwater Community Planning Area are owned and maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service thereby relieving the County of most responsibilities for those trails.

Volunteer Trail Patrol

County Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and Sweetwater Authority have recruited and

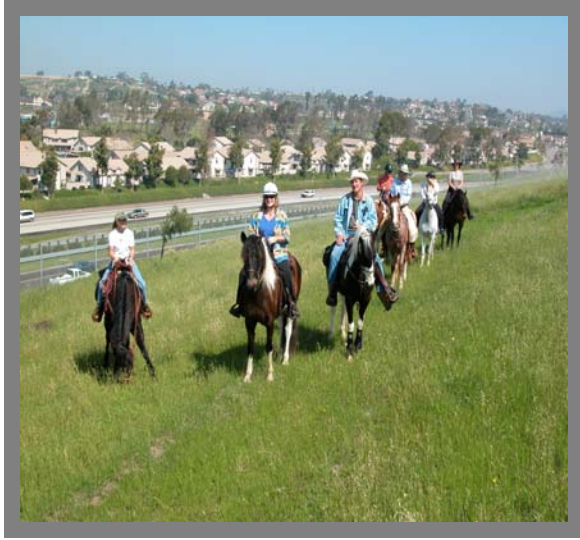
managed a shared Volunteer Trail Patrol. Not only do these volunteers keep local trails safer, but they also devote countless hours to routine and periodic trail maintenance. We would like to see the scope of this Trail Patrol expanded to encompass all trails within the Sweetwater Community Planning Area and neighboring Chula Vista trails.

SWEETWATER COMMUNITY TRAILS MAP SUMMARY

As a result of the community trails outreach process for development of the CTMP, the Sweetwater Community Planning Group completed several tasks, and prioritized community trails and pathways as well as their special features. Each trail and pathway was labeled and recorded producing a community trails map and index.

Proposed trails shown on trails maps contained in the Community Trail Master Plan depict corridors of general alignments. The term “general alignment” is used to describe the general location of a future trail within a designated corridor so that the specific alignment can be determined during the review and approval process when a discretionary application is submitted for a development permit for land that includes a trail corridor. The designated corridor is approximately one-quarter mile wide. A general alignment is useful because it allows the trail to be located to avoid extreme topographical conditions, sensitive habitat or other site-specific constraints.

COUNTY TRAILS PROGRAM
COMMUNITY TRAILS MASTER PLAN



Community Open Space Trail, Bonita

SWEETWATER COMMUNITY TRAILS MAP INDEX

A Community trails map index was not completed by the Sweetwater Community.

Sweetwater Community Trails Map



Sweetwater.pdf
(5.69 MB)